

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:9&10**

### Chapter 18- The Manifest Love of God

#### 177- The Manifest Love of God- Part 1

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WAOY Tuesday 04/01/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to begin to look at what John taught about "The Manifest Love of God". So let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:9&10** together:

**9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.**

**10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

Now on the last broadcast- we saw how that John didn't say that God loved us or that God is loving- but that essentially God *is* Love. You see, as God is light; as God is a Spirit- so too God is also Love and it isn't that God has some degree of love like we do- but that God Himself is Love- Love is part of Who God is and so in verses 9 & 10- John continues on with this idea that God is Love and elaborates even more deeply on it.

Because God is Love then it is reasonable that God cannot and will not keep this Love hidden. So John tells us in verse 9 that the love of God was "**manifested in us**". Now what does this actually mean? Well the word that was translated here into English as "manifested" is the Greek word, *faneroo*- which means: to make visible or known what is hidden whether by words or deeds. So when God manifested His great Love in us- he made visible or known that Love that had been hidden and God did this by both words and deeds.

So we see that God's love was manifested- it was made known; it was brought into tangibility; it was brought out from being hidden and obscure and darkened into the open so that it can be seen and felt and understood and defined.

Now we must understand that God didn't just become love recently, dear friends. God has *always* been Love and God has *always* been light, and God has *always* been spirit. There has never been one moment that God was not Love. But this love that God is was hidden or it was obscure to us- not because God didn't manifest it- because God manifested His Love toward us over and over and over again all throughout human history.

But God's Love as hidden or obscure to us because our understanding of God; our revelation of God; the revelation that God had given to Man about Himself was only partial and was incomplete.

You see, brothers and sisters- the only thing that we know about God that is true is what God has chosen to reveal about Himself to us. Everything that we know about a car or about a computer or about an airplane is known because we invented those things and we can know them fully.

But to know God is in itself a gift from God. And God has chosen to reveal Himself to Man in two ways:

1. Creation
2. Scripture

The revelation of God that is found in Creation is called general revelation. It is called that because that revelation of God that is seen and displayed in Gods' Creation is general in nature. For example, in **Psalms 19:1**, King David said:

**The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.**

So, we can see that through God's wonderful and good Creation- we can see and we can understand some very basic and yet very important aspects of God's Character and Nature. For example- from a mountain- we can know and we can see that God is greater and more powerful than we are because no man can create a mountain. From the eyelashes of a new born baby- we can see how wise God is because no man can work in such fine detail.

From the stars we can see how vast God is because no man can sling stars into space and set the orbit of planets. From the lilies of the

field we can see how God provides because Jesus said that Solomon in all his glory and with all his power and wealth was not arrayed like one single flower is arrayed. From the ant we can see how wise God is to give the knowledge to labor in the summer to put up for the winter that even an ant understands.

On and on as we watch a sunset; as we stand amazed at the Grand Canyon; as we stand in silence to behold a single blade of grass pushing up through concrete- in all of God's Creation- God's Own Glory; His Wisdom; His Majesty; His Power: His Wisdom; His Might; His Omnipotence; and His Sovereignty is displayed and broadcast and manifested and brought to light and shown and proven beyond any doubt – beyond even the slightest doubt; beyond even the smallest degree of doubt that God is God and He is Almighty and as Almighty and as all Powerful and as Majestic- He is worthy; He is deserving He is entitled to our praise and our honor and our devotion and our allegiance and our service and our love.

God wraps Himself in light; He stretched out the Heavens and He walks on the wings of the wind; He sets the course of rivers and the oceans, and He draws a line in the earth and tells the seas that they come this far but no further. God threw stars out into the vast blackness of space and they hung there and God established the planets as they orbit the sun. God spoke one time and said, **“Let there be light”** and there was light and that light shone four days before God created the sun and God has never had to tell the light to shine ever again and today that light is so precise and so accurate that we set our clocks by it.

God raised up vast mountain ranges and fashioned the foundations of the earth. God made waterfalls and valleys and deserts and His finger touches the tops of mountains and they smoke. Every bird that flies; every cricket that chirps; every animal that runs and sever fish that swims does so to bring glory and honor and praise to their Creator and even the trees of the field magnify God as the wind blows against them and they clap their hands for joy.

Late in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a black man named George Washington Carver sought after God to behold His Glory- but God would not allow him to see His Glory and so Carver was directed to the most insignificant of all things- the lowly peanut. And after decades of intensely studying the peanut- Carver found over 117 different uses for this smallest of God's Creation and preached and taught all over the

country about the Glory of God that he had found hidden inside the peanut.

Now even though the revelation of God that we get from Creation is general in nature- we still receive so much revelation about God from this source that God holds all men accountable for what they can know and see and understand about God from God's Creation. Let's read what the Apostle Paul said about this in **Romans 1:18-23**:

**18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**

**19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.**

**20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.**

**21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.**

**22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,**

**23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.**

Notice that Paul said here in verse 20 that all men have absolutely no excuse whatsoever for not worshipping and honoring God from the general things about God that we can see and know from Creation.

I tell you that the mountains and the flowers and the trees and the animals will cry out against us in the Day of Judgment if we do not fall before this great Omnipotent God and worship and adore and obey and serve Him.

But as great as the general revelation that we get from Creation is- God has been gracious to give us an even more detailed and elaborate and sophisticated revelation of Himself to Man. And that superior revelation; that much more detailed revelation; that much more sophisticated revelation of God is given to us through the pages of inspired Scripture.

We may know many general Truths about God as Creator and Sovereign from Creation- so much so that God holds us all accountable

for the revelation that we do get from Creation- but through the inspired, inerrant, infallible Words of Scripture- God is revealed to man in a much more vast scope and in a far superior detail and to a far greater degree.

For example- it is from Scripture that we can know what God loves and what God hates. This glorious God defines for us in great detail through the pages of the Word of God what is sin and what is righteousness- and because God's revelation is so superior in Scripture than it is in Creation- therefore we will be held far more accountable to what is written in Scripture than we are from what we can see and know through Creation.

And because this is true- because God has been so faithful and gracious to reveal to us His Will in Scripture- we are then held accountable for what we do and how we live and we will all have to stand before this God to give an account of our lives and what we said and what we thought and the condition of our hearts based upon God's standard of what is right and wrong as revealed to us in Scripture.

For example- it is from the pages of Scripture- and not from the ocean- we can know and we can see a very detailed account of how God deals with Man and how God speaks to Man and how God moves upon Man. It is from Scripture not a waterfall that we find out how God converts the human soul. It is from Scripture – not a star- that we can know about Heaven and the Church and what the qualifications are for someone to hold a position of leadership in the House of God and how a sinner can be saved. It is from Scripture- not a sunset- that God's Truth about life and godliness is made known to us.

So even though the revelation of God from Creation is general revelation- we all are responsible to honor and worship and love and obey this great God of Creation- but because the revelation of God in Scripture is far superior to that revelation of God in Creation- we are held even more responsible to love and honor and obey the God of Scripture than we are the God of Creation. As the revelation rises in detail and importance- our responsibility to cherish the revelation and submit to it and obey it also rises.

And the great crescendo of all revelation, John says, is that God chose to reveal His Love to us; God chose to manifest His great Love toward us; God chose to unveil his hidden love to Man through the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the highest of all revelations. Jesus is the greatest example of all examples. Jesus is the most important manifestation of all manifestations. When you want to see a manifestation of God's Power- go look at a mountain. When you want to see a manifestation of God's Glory- behold a sunset. When you want to see a manifestation of God's wisdom – look into the face of a child. But when you want to see the greatest manifestation of God's Love- look into the Face of Jesus. Stare into His Eyes. Hear Him speak. Watch Him move. Behold His Grace. Stand in awe of His Majesty. Lean upon his breast; Hear His Heartbeat. Listen to His Words- and cherish Him and adore Him and follow Him and obey Him and love Him enough to do what He says- because Jesus is God and this God is Love.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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